DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 230 929 CS 007 213

TITLE Teacher Characteristics and Teacher Education in Reading and English Language Arts Instruction: Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in "Dissertation Abstracts International," January through June 1983 (Vol. 43 Nos. 7 through 12).

INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.

PUB DATE 83

NOTE 10p.; Pages may be marginally legible.

PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Role; Annotated Bibliographies; Decision Making; Doctoral Dissertations; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Language Arts; *Reading Instruction; Reading Programs *Reading Research; Reading Teachers; Remedial Reading; Student Teacher Relationship; Teacher Behavior; *Teacher Characteristics; *Teacher Education; *Teacher Effectiveness; Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 16 titles deal with a variety of topics, including the following: (1) the relationship between selected teacher personality traits and the teaching behaviors of remedial reading teachers; (2) reading program problems of beginning elementary school teachers and their sources of help; (3) reading educators' and content educators' views on key objectives of content-related reading education; (4) the effects of the reading resource teacher as perceived by the classroom teacher; (5) perceptions of principals' leadership behaviors related to the reading programs in elementary schools with high and low student achievement; (6) the impact of language differences on oral reading analysis; (7) communications styles and their relationship to evaluations between teacher and students; (8) communicative dimensions of teaching effectiveness; (9) individual teacher differences, predictions, and questioning strategies and student responses during reading lessons; (10) job descriptions for reading specialists in selected school districts in the United States; and (11) intermediate grade teachers' instructional decision making in reading. (FL)

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Teacher Characteristics and Teacher Education in Reading and English Language Arts Instruction:

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Compiled by the Staff
of the
ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills

CS 007213

This bibliography has been compiled as part of a continuing series designed to make information on relevant dissertations available to users of the ERIC system. Monthly issues of Dissertation Abstracts International are reviewed in order to compile abstracts of dissertations on related topics, which thus become accessible in searches of the ERIC data base. Ordering information for the dissertations themselves is included at the end of the bibliography.

Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

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A TREATMENT FOR THE EXPLORATION AND REFINEMENT OF AN ACTIVITY STRUCTURE TAXONOMY IN LANGUAGE ARTS

Benson, Sheryl Colbert
READING PROGRAM PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM TEACHERS AND THEIR SOURCES OF HELP

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ATTITUDES OF LOUISIANA PUBLIC SECONDARY PRINCIPALS AND ENGLISH TEACHERS TOWARD TEACHING THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELECTED TEACHER PERSONALITY TRAITS AND THE TEACHING BEHAVIORS OF REMEDIAL READING TEACHERS Order No. DA8303182

ALESSI, LINDA GORDON, PH.D. *State University of New York at Buffalo*, 1982. 252pp.

The major purpose of the study was to look at the effect of aspects of personality on teaching performance. It was the plan of the study to identify behaviors that differentiated the effectiveness of remedial reading teachers, and then to determine whether the identified differences were related to personality characteristics.

The subjects were nine female teachers enrolled in a Master's Degree program in reading education and registered in a clinical practicum in reading. These teachers represented three distinct personality categories as identified by their performance on two subscales of the FIRO-B, which were plotted onto a circumplex personality/behavior model. Three trained observers viewed four teaching sessions totalling 120 minutes of videotaped instruction on each subject, and then independently rated 18 dimensions of each teacher's behavior using a modified version of Ryans' Classroom Observation Record and Glossary. Dominant instructional behaviors, identified from the ratings, were described for each subject. These dominant characteristics were analyzed for within and across group comparisons. The results of the study suggested that consistent teaching behaviors were not found within any of the three personality groups identified. Subjects were then regrouped according to similarities in dominant instructional traits, and within and across group comparisons were made. Comparable behaviors were noted within the two groups subsequently identified. Across group comparisons yielded differences between these latter two groups.

Conclusions from the study indicated that the instruction provided by effective remedial reading teachers was characterized by numerous dominant traits, whereas the behaviors of the second or stereotyped group, found to be only adequate in effectiveness, lacked dominant teaching traits. Conclusions were also drawn about the effectiveness of the instruments employed in the investigation; insights into the use of observers to evaluate teacher competence were presented, as were contributing factors which may have affected the personality categorizations. Implications for teacher evaluators and teacher preparation programs were drawn.

A TREATMENT FOR THE EXPLORATION AND REFINEMENT OF AN ACTIVITY STRUCTURE TAXONOMY IN LANGUAGE ARTS Order No. DA8227336

ARMSTRONG, MAVIE ELIZABETH, ED.D. *The University of Arizona*, 1982. 223pp. Director: Vivian L. Cox

Historically, disciplines other than education have studied the culture of the classroom. Yet, the group phenomena of education has been ignored. The ways teachers manage groups and lesson activities appear to have important implications for the study of teaching and learning. However, there are no rules to follow. A decision-making base does not exist. Yet, the study of teacher and student behavior is dependent upon the setting within which that behavior occurs. An appropriate choice must be made for an objective method to provide an adequate level of description of the teaching/learning context of the classroom. That is the focus of this study.

The subjects were nine classroom teachers, grades 1 or 2, from two separate school districts within a 50-mile radius of Tucson, Arizona. Six teachers served as the control group and three teachers served as the treatment group. Treatment consisted of orientation in the concept of activity structures, videotaping of language arts instruction, coding of such instruction by the researcher and stimulated recall of such instruction by the teacher in a feedback session with the researcher. Instrumentation consisted of a beliefs questionnaire, a teacher information form, a journal, and an interview all developed by the researcher. Instrumentation occurred with both groups, both pre- and posttreatment. Ethnographic techniques were used for both instrumentation and treatment.

READING PROGRAM PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM TEACHERS AND THEIR SOURCES OF HELP Order No. DA8302804

BENSON, SHERYL COLBERT, PH.D. *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*, 1982. 149pp.

Purposes. The major purpose of this study was to identify the degree of difficulty which beginning elementary classroom teachers had including selected instructional activities in their reading programs. The second purpose of this study was to identify sources to help that beginning elementary classroom teachers employed in solving problems associated with the selected reading instructional activities. The third purpose of this study was to determine if primary and intermediate elementary classroom teachers differ in development across years of teaching experience, when selected instructional activities were categorized according to developmental stages (requirements of teaching, refinements of teaching and individualization of teaching).

Procedures. A written questionnaire, designed by the researcher, and personal interviews were the instruments used to collect the data for this study. The questionnaires were mailed to all 735 graduates of the University of Illinois Elementary or Early Childhood Program between January, 1976 and May, 1980. There were 486 graduates who returned the questionnaire. From these respondents there were 295 graduates who were elementary classroom teachers. The responses of these 295 elementary classroom teachers were used in the study.

Findings. "Individualizing reading instruction", "knowing how to differentiate between a child's learning problems and his/her psychological problems" and "motivating children to read independently" were ranked as the first through third most difficult instructional activities across all years of experience. "Other teachers at your school" was marked as the most frequently used source of help across all five years of teaching experience. The second ranking source of help by all teachers indicated that teachers did not seek any assistance when attempting to solve problems.

Results of the ANOVAs for stages one and two, requirements and refinements of teaching, showed teachers' mean scores in these stages were significantly different across years of teaching experience, but no significant difference was shown between mean scores of primary and intermediate grade level teachers. The ANOVA results for the third stage, individualization of teaching, showed primary and intermediate teachers' mean scores for the third stage were significantly different, but there was no difference across years of teaching experience.

A SURVEY OF READING EDUCATORS' AND CONTENT EDUCATORS' VIEWS ON KEY OBJECTIVES OF CONTENT-RELATED READING EDUCATION Order No. DA8303087

BISHOP, DAVID MICHAEL, ED.D. *State University of New York at Buffalo*, 1982. 389pp.

Reports a descriptive/comparative study of the opinions and practice of a nationwide sample of education professors regarding content-related reading education. Professors in five fields--Reading, English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies--were surveyed by mail questionnaire on their opinions as to the most appropriate course(s) in which to teach 35 selected objectives of content-related reading education, and on their practices as to the amount of time they spend on the same 35 objectives. The questionnaire was developed by conducting a search of the field literature and pretesting it on selected professionals in the targeted areas.

From a total potential sample of 500 (100 each in the five fields) 167 educators, or 33.4 per cent, returned completed and useable questionnaires. Reading Educators returned at the highest rate, 61 per cent. Further data on participants are reported, including rates of return for each group and professional preparation and responsibilities of participants. Data on reasons for nonparticipation of selected nonparticipants are also reported.

A contingency analysis was conducted to determine whether relationships existed between membership in Educator group and responses to the opinions and practices items ($p \leq .05$). Cramer's V was computed to determine strength of relationships. It was found that for nine of 35 objectives a relationship was found to exist between membership in Educator group and responses to opinions items such that Educator groups disagreed on the most appropriate

course in which to teach the objectives. Furthermore, it was found that for 29 of 35 objectives a relationship was found to exist between membership in Educator group and responses to practices items such that Educator groups differed in the amount of emphasis they placed on the objectives in their courses.

It was concluded that Reading Educators are more involved in the teaching of content-related reading objectives and believe that the objectives are not the sole responsibility of reading educators. Content Educators by group tended to stress different objectives, and as a whole tended to regard the objectives as the major responsibility of reading educators. English Educators did not appear to be significantly more involved in reading objectives than other Content Educators.

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF THE READING RESOURCE TEACHER AS PERCEIVED BY THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

Order No. DA8306367

BULLS, RICHARD EDWARD, II, ED.D. *Lehigh University*, 1983. 96pp.

The purpose of this investigation was to study the perceptions of classroom teachers regarding the effectiveness of reading resource teachers. The raw data consisted of a total of 171 critical incidents elicited from 64 elementary school teachers in response to the request to recall positive, negative and neutral incidents involving a reading resource teacher. No more than two incidents of each kind were to be given. Analysis of the contents of these critical incidents led the investigator to classify them into five categories of assistance to the classroom teacher: Class 1, in general teaching of reading techniques; Class 2, in diagnosing and prescribing correction of reading problems; Class 3, in demonstrating expertise in instructional materials; Class 4, in special and administrative tasks; Class 5, in teaching reading in direct contact with groups of children. This classification was confirmed by two independent judges.

There are two findings of interest. The first finding comes from the fact that the classes that emerged from the critical incidents differed in the numbers of incidents they contained. Class 5 contains the greatest number of incidents, 60, while Class 4 contains the least number of incidents, eight. Classes 1, 2, & 3 contain 28, 40, & 31 incidents respectively. What the study reveals, then, is that the major areas of assistance by the reading resource teacher as perceived by the classroom teacher are in teaching reading in direct contact with groups of children, in general teaching of reading techniques, in diagnosing and prescribing correction of reading problems, in developing expertise in instructional materials. Apparently there was little perceived assistance in special or administrative tasks.

The second finding comes from the fact that the five classes differed significantly in the proportions of positive and negative incidents they included. Excluding Class 4, which would seem to represent an area outside of the reading resource teacher's domain, the proportion of positive incidents far outweighed the proportion of negative incidents in all areas of assistance except in the general teaching of reading techniques (Class 1), in which there were twice as many negative as positive incidents. Except for this one area, then, the classroom teachers seemed satisfied with the assistance received from the reading resource teachers.

PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS RELATED TO THE READING PROGRAM IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WITH HIGH AND LOW STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Order No. DA8302217

COMBS, MARTHA W., ED.D. *The University of Florida*, 1982. 162pp. Chairman: William R. Powell

The present study was conducted to examine the relationship between student achievement of basic skills in reading and the leadership behaviors and background characteristics of principals in the elementary school reading program in low socioeconomic schools. The study was designed to identify activities in the reading program which distinguished principals of schools with high student achievement from principals of schools with low student achievement.

For both third and fifth grades in the participating schools, the percentage of students mastering basic reading skills was either above 92% or below 92%. School populations also had between 35% and 70% of the students qualifying for the free and reduced lunch program. Participating in the study were 20 principals and 328 teachers.

A questionnaire that focused upon the principal's involvement with teachers, students, and parents in reading was developed by the writer. Principals and teachers rated the involvement of other persons with the principal in reading program activities.

Questionnaire responses were analyzed by (a) schools, high and low achieving; (b) respondents, principals and teachers; and (c) the interaction between schools and respondents. Background characteristics of principals were also compared in relation to years of experience as an elementary principal, elementary training, years of elementary teaching experience, and preparation in reading for principals of high and low achieving schools.

High achieving schools differed significantly from low achieving schools in activities of the principal related to (a) providing materials for reading instruction, (b) assisting teachers in solving classroom reading problems, (c) helping teachers implement a classroom management system in reading, and (d) encouraging teachers to assist parents with ways to help children with reading at home.

Teachers of high and low achieving schools rated principals' involvement in (a) setting goals for reading, (b) planning for inservice needs, (c) reviewing test data for program involvement, (d) encouraging teachers to utilize parents as volunteers, (e) communicating expectations for mastering skills to students, and (f) communicating the importance of reading to students at a significantly lower level than did the principals. In addition, principals of high and low achieving schools were not significantly different in background characteristics.

THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES ON ORAL READING ANALYSIS

Order No. DA8304705

DAVEY, LYNN MARIE, PH.D. *Arizona State University*, 1982. 134pp.

This study investigated the impact of language differences (dialect) on teachers' perceptions of oral reading on expectations of future academic success, diagnoses of reading strengths and weaknesses, and instructional prescriptions. The effect of teachers' educational background, years of experience, and type of teaching situation was analyzed.

Subjects were one-hundred-fifteen intermediate teachers who listened to one of three tapes read in a different dialect (standard English, Mexican-American English, and black English) and completed a thirty-nine item questionnaire assessing diagnoses, expectations, and instructional prescriptions. Instructional prescription items required teachers to rank skill areas, instructional activities, and reading approaches, and to recommend the most beneficial program placement (learning disabilities, remedial reading, classroom developmental).

A 2 x 2 x 2 x 3 factorial design was used to analyze teachers' diagnoses and expectations. The dependent variables were the teachers' responses on the questionnaire. The independent variables were the treatment and two levels of teachers' educational background, years of experience, and type of teaching situation. The Friedman Two-Way ANOVA by Ranks was utilized to analyze the teachers' ranks of skill areas, reading approaches, and instructional activities. A chi square statistic was utilized to analyze teachers' recommendations of program placement.

The results indicated that teachers' expectations of academic success and diagnoses were not affected by dialect. Teachers' educational background, years of experience, and type of teaching situation did not affect their expectations or diagnoses.

Teachers' ranks of skill areas, reading approaches, and instructional activities were affected by dialect. Dialect and teachers' educational background did not affect their recommendations of program placement. Within the black English group, less experienced teachers recommended the classroom program, while more experienced teachers recommended remedial placement. Within the Mexican-American treatment, teachers from Mexican-American schools recommended the developmental placement, while teachers from white schools recommended remedial placement.

Teachers' language attitudes seem to be more positive than previous research has indicated. The findings indicate a need for

teachers to have exposure to children speaking nonstandard dialects. Training is warranted in the areas of the language experience approach and activities to enhance experiential background. Teachers also must become familiar with such language aspects as phonology, syntax, and lexicon.

COMMUNICATIONS STYLES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO EVALUATIONS BETWEEN TEACHER AND STUDENTS

Order No. DA8229263

FRAILEY, DONALD RAYMOND, PH.D. *Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*, 1982. 127pp. Major Professor: Dr. Edward B. Sasse

Purposes. The study sought to determine if ratings of students by their classroom teacher and ratings of the teacher by his/her students can be correlated with teacher and student communication styles. The study investigated these differences by comparing the mean score ratings of teachers and students with each population's communication style, grade level, and sex.

Procedures. Seventy-seven classrooms of students and their teachers were the subjects for this study. The students and teachers who served as subjects were listed in either the fifth, eighth, or twelfth year of school.

Communication styles were listed as: Intuitor, Thinker, Feeler, and Sensor. Both groups of subjects were tested to determine their communication styles. Teachers rated their students on eight student behavior traits. Students rated their teachers on twenty behavioral and professional traits.

Six hypotheses were developed and analyzed on the .05 level of significance. A one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedure was utilized to determine significant mean scores.

Findings. (1) There was a significant difference between teachers' communication style and how they rated their students. The differences exist, however, only for Intuitor and Feeler Teachers and only for the traits of dependability, consideration, punctuality, and creativity. (2) There was a significant difference between communication style and the grade level of teachers rating students. The differences exist, however, only for Feeler and Sensor Teachers and only for certain selected traits. (3) There was a significant difference between communication style and the sex of the teachers rating students. The differences do not exist for Thinker Teachers, but do exist for Intuitor, Feeler, and Sensor Teachers. Again, these differences exist only for selected traits. (4) There was a significant difference between the communication styles of students and how they rate their teachers, but the difference exists only for Thinker and Feeler Students. (5) There was no significant difference between the communication style and the grade level of students in terms of how they rate their teachers. (6) There was a significant difference between the communication style and the sex of the student rating teachers. However, significant difference exists only for Sensor Students.

COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

Order No. DA8308939

GARRISON, S. SCOTT, PH.D. *Michigan State University*, 1982. 117pp.

The purpose of this study was to explore three communication variables--perceived communication competence, style and immediacy--in an effort to begin clarifying the behavioral (i.e. communicative) dimensions of teaching effectiveness. Each of these three communication variables was measured with respect to its impact upon the following indices of teaching effectiveness: student affect (toward course content, toward the instructor, and toward advocated communication practices); behavioral commitment (adopting suggestions and enrolling in another course of related content); and cognitive achievement (test scores).

Based on a review of the literature, three behavioral independent variables (student perception of their teachers' communicative competence, style and immediacy) were evaluated with respect to their impact on one dependent variable, teaching effectiveness.

Eight hundred sixty-seven undergraduate students enrolled in one basic communication course at Michigan State University participated in the investigation.

Results indicated that communication practices in the classroom have a profound influence on education outcomes. Specifically, Perceived Communication Competence, Teacher Style, and Communicative Immediacy consistently predicted teaching effectiveness variables such as student affect, behavioral commitment, and cognitive achievement. Also, results indicated that (1) the most important predictors of student affect toward communication practices suggested in the course were perceived competence and style; (2) student affect toward course content was was most powerfully predicted by perceived communication competence; (3) all three teacher communication variables (competence, style and immediacy) were powerful predictors of student affect toward their instructors; (4) the adoption of course suggestions was also powerfully predicted by each of the three independent measures; and (5) cognitive achievement was most influenced, by far, by perceived instructor communication competence. The meaning and importance of these results is discussed with respect to their value to teachers and those who train teachers.

INDIVIDUAL TEACHER DIFFERENCES, TEACHER PREDICTIONS, TEACHER QUESTIONING STRATEGIES AND STUDENT RESPONSES DURING READING LESSONS: A TEACHER EXPECTATION PERSPECTIVE

Order No. DA8229033

LALIK, ROSARY MACEDO, ED.D. *Syracuse University*, 1982. 200pp.

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the usefulness of teacher expectation theory for explaining classroom processes involved in reading instruction. In order to accomplish this purpose, two studies were completed.

Since students' question-answering behaviors may provide insight into the qualitative nature of students' reading comprehension, the first study was designed to examine relationships between teachers' predictions for students' question-answering behavior and student's actual question-answering behavior. Five fifth grade teachers read two passages and 36 related questions: 12 Type One Memory Task Questions, 12 Type Two Memory Task Questions and 12 Comprehension Task Questions. Teachers predicted which questions would be correctly answered by each student within their reading classes. During reading group lessons, students read the passages and answered the related questions.

According to a strict version of teacher expectation theory, students' classroom responses and subsequent learning are consistent with teacher expectations. Consequently, teacher predictions were compared to student responses in terms of the consistency between: (a) the number of predicted correct responses for each student and the number of actual correct responses for each student; (b) the number of predicted correct responses for each question type and for each reading group and the number of actual correct responses for each question type and for each reading group, and (c) variables related to teacher predictions and variables related to student responses.

ANOVA and regression procedures indicated several inconsistencies between teacher predictions and student responses. These findings raised questions concerning the usefulness of teacher expectation theory for explaining classroom phenomena. Because alternate versions of expectation theory have incorporated notions of teachers' expectations for students' cooperation as well as notions of individual teacher differences, the question was raised concerning whether a less parsimonious version of expectation theory might be more useful for explaining teachers' instructional behaviors during reading lessons. This question was examined in the second study.

In this study, four lessons were observed for each of 10 fifth grade teachers and their middle reading group students. . . . (Author's abstract exceeds stipulated maximum length. Discontinued here with permission of author.) UMI

THE READING HABITS OF RANDOMLY SELECTED K-12 WISCONSIN SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN PROFESSIONAL AND NON-PROFESSIONAL PERIODICALS

Order No. DA8215949

MASON, RICHARD WAYNE, PH.D. *The University of Wisconsin - Madison*, 1982. 136pp. Supervisor: Professor Donald J. McCarty

The Problem. The purpose of this study was to examine the reading habits of randomly selected K-12 Wisconsin school superintendents in professional and non-professional periodicals.

Superintendents' professional reading habits were examined by task categories.

How superintendents felt about reading and how much they felt professional and recreational reading should be promoted among subordinates was examined, as well as which non-professional periodicals were read.

Design of the Study. One hundred Wisconsin K-12 school superintendents were randomly selected for this study. The response rate to the mailed questionnaire was 81 percent. *The Reading Habits and Interest Survey Questionnaire* was developed for this study. The reliability and validity of the instrument were analyzed and found to be acceptable.

A one-way analysis of variance was used to test whether the means of the frequency of professional periodicals read were significantly different for the levels of the various task categories.

A Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was used to test if the relationship between various demographic factors and the frequency with which professional periodicals were read was significant. An acceptance level of .05 was established for both statistical tests.

Findings. The comparison between frequency of professional periodicals read and task categories was not found to vary significantly. No significant difference was found between the frequency of professional periodicals read and the three demographic factors of total years as a superintendent, size of school district, and highest degree held. However, age and total years in education were found to be significant.

Conclusions and Implications. It can be concluded that professional periodicals did not specialize in any one task area but tended to be generalized in nature and addressed all four task areas on an equal basis.

Superintendents who read professional periodicals frequently, tended to be older and have more years in education than those superintendents who did not.

Superintendents felt strongly about promoting professional reading among subordinates, but less inclined to promote recreational reading.

Wisconsin superintendents most often read the following four professional periodicals: *The Phi Delta Kappan, American School Board Journal, Executive Educator*, and *Wisconsin School News*.

In non-professional periodicals, national and world news were most often read.

AN ANALYSIS OF JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR READING SPECIALISTS IN SELECTED SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Order No. DA8306806

MOSBY, EMMA GRACE, PH.D. *Texas A&M University*, 1982. 131pp. Chairman: Dr. Harold L. Hawkins

The purpose of this study was to determine the critical tasks to be performed by the reading specialist. A random sample of 50 school districts was selected from a population of 100 of the largest school districts in the United States. Forty-nine districts responded. The critical tasks were taken from job descriptions for the reading specialists from the 31 usuable responses for the study.

Data analysis of the job descriptions was done manually using a content analysis technique. A total of 416 tasks were listed first. After an item analysis, 42 critical tasks were identified. A questionnaire was composed and sent to a panel of experts for them to score each task with regard to importance of being on a Reading Specialist job description. This was compiled with the researcher's findings. The final critical task list included 17 items. The most essential task was determined to be *working with curriculum assistants and other school personnel in interpreting the reading and language development program to teachers, instructional assistants, parents, and community*. This task was shown as included by 100% of the respondents in their job descriptions. The remaining 16 critical tasks ranged from 98.4% to 71% frequency response.

Based on the results of this study, other conclusions were that: (1) Of the 8,467 reading personnel, 25.7% were employed with the job title reading specialist and 74.3% used another title. These percentages were influenced by the larger school districts that had more persons employed with another title. However, more than 67% of the school districts contributing to this study's data used the title reading specialist. (2) When the State certification requirements procured from the school districts were compared to the International Reading Association (IRA) requirements, the results showed that most school districts tended to agree with IRA. (3) Administrators listed the following reasons for not using the reading specialist title: school board policy, state certification requirements, and federal guidelines or requirements.

Based on the conclusion of this research, it is recommended that there should be an increased emphasis on the development of a job description, for actual use, for the reading specialist by the administrators of the school districts.

ARIZONA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AND READING: BACKGROUNDS, OPINIONS, PRACTICES, AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Order No. DA8303393

PIERSON, CAROL ANNE, PH.D. *The University of Arizona*, 1982. 103pp. Director: Dr. W. Valmont

This study examines the educational and professional backgrounds, opinions, practices, and working conditions of Arizona school superintendents with respect to their districts' reading programs.

The questions investigated for this study were: (1) What are the educational, professional and reading backgrounds of Arizona school superintendents? (2) What professional organizations and publications appear to be most influential for Arizona school superintendents? (3) What are the expressed important tasks of Arizona superintendents? (4) Who advises Arizona school superintendents about reading matters? (5) What criteria do Arizona school superintendents use to select advisors in the area of reading? (6) What methods do Arizona school superintendents use to evaluate their reading programs? (7) What are the opinions of Arizona school superintendents regarding the effectiveness of their district reading programs? (8) What solutions to the reading problems of their districts do Arizona school superintendents propose? (9) What negative factors do Arizona school superintendents believe influence their districts' reading programs?

A stratified, randomized sample of (36) Arizona school superintendents was selected to participate in the study. Twenty-nine superintendents actually participated.

Superintendents tended to hold advanced degrees, and a majority of them had earned doctorates. Their advanced degrees were usually in education administration, while their undergraduate degrees were very diverse. They tended to have few if any hours in reading courses. They did not read journals devoted to reading, nor did they attend reading conferences. Their reading advisors did not tend to be reading specialists, although superintendents stated that they valued "reading knowledge" and "reading experience" in their advisors. The solutions to superintendents' reading program difficulties tended to be external solutions, rather than solutions which could be implemented by themselves. A variety of other findings are reported in the study.

AN INVESTIGATION OF FIRST-TIME UNIVERSITY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT TEACHING ASSISTANTS: CONSIDERATIONS FOR TRAINING PROGRAMS

Order No. DA8303849

SAMUELSON, JANET E., PH.D. *Michigan State University*, 1982. 144pp.

This study investigates teaching assistants in American university English departments: the origins and history of teaching assistants and the major issues in training programs for them. I also conducted a survey of first-time teaching assistants at five universities in an attempt to learn more about their backgrounds, their understanding of

and attitudes toward writing theory, and their knowledge of writing pedagogy. Finally, I discussed the profile that emerged of the teaching assistants in context with the major recommendations for training programs posited by such theorists as Donald Murray, Janet Emig, Wallace Douglas, Donald Nemanich, and Richard Gebhardt.

The survey revealed that the prospective teaching assistants had extensive experiential backgrounds in writing, but their educational backgrounds in writing were considerably weaker. While they reported having had little knowledge of specific theorists and theories in writing and pedagogy, they more closely aligned themselves with the recent "process oriented" approach to writing and its teaching than with the "prescriptive" orientation--perhaps reflecting their experience as writers which they bring to their newfound role as teachers.

From the information reported by the teaching assistants and the major concerns discussed by the theorists, training programs are an essential feature of preparing graduate students to teach college-level writing courses, especially given the concentration of literature in undergraduate English majors' curricula. Furthermore, comprehensive and sustained training programs are needed because they offer prospective college teachers the only training they might receive before entering the field as professionals. While training programs provide soon-to-be teachers an opportunity to explore a rich and complex field, they are nonetheless flawed because of the short period of time given to them. In addition, they cannot guarantee effective teaching nor dictate attitudes toward writing, theory, and pedagogy. Their importance is, however, not diminished because in training programs, undergraduates' improved writing is, ultimately, at stake, and that improvement begins with effective college writing teachers.

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERMEDIATE GRADE TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONAL DECISION-MAKING IN READING

Order No. DA8307949

SIMPSON, ANNE DAVIS, PH.D. *North Texas State University*, 1982. 393pp.

This study described the rationales used by individual teachers in the selection of activities for reading instruction. The relationship between the teachers' conceptions of reading and factors in their present teaching environment were analyzed as influences in their rationales given. Patterns in teachers' thinking about activities representing two theoretical positions in reading were identified.

In-depth interviews were conducted with sixteen fourth and fifth grade teachers randomly selected from seven school districts in the North Texas area. Teachers completed an instrument to identify their conceptions of reading and then described their current reading instruction program. Teachers then responded to twelve activity cards representing two theoretical positions in reading and discussed the current and potential use of each activity in their present situation. Specific reasons for the use of each activity were elicited. Analysis of the data followed qualitative methodology procedures to identify the rationales used and patterns in teacher thinking about specific activities.

Within the limitations of this study, the following conclusions have been formulated. (1) Teachers use multiple rationales in the selection of reading instructional activities which reflect consideration for elements related to the activity, the reading curriculum, the student, classroom management and the larger school environment. (2) Teachers' conceptions of reading are evidenced in their rationales but reflect general understandings of reading rather than precise theoretical positions. (3) Teachers' considerations of the actual teaching environment are balanced with conceptions of reading in their rationales for selecting reading activities with adherence to the adopted basal program and the class structure utilized as predominant influences. (4) Individual teacher differences were found in the rationales given and in reliance on influences from conceptions of reading and the actual teaching environment, thus indicating individual differences in the degree to which teachers make instructional decisions about reading. (5) Collectively, teachers' rationales reflect different pattens in thinking about instructional activities representing the "content-centered" and "pupil-centered" theories of reading.

ATTITUDES OF LOUISIANA PUBLIC SECONDARY PRINCIPALS AND ENGLISH TEACHERS TOWARD TEACHING THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

Order No. DA8305822

WOODS, JIMMY LAVON, ED.D. *Northwestern State University of Louisiana*, 1982. 147pp. Directed by: Dr. Dan B. Carr

Purpose of the Study. The purpose of the study was to explore the viewpoints of public school secondary principals and English teachers regarding the controversial nature, importance, and problems associated with teaching the Bible as literature in order to explain the apparent lack of Biblical instruction in the secondary English classrooms in Louisiana.

Procedure. Subjects participating in this study were thirty-one randomly selected secondary principals and sixty-six English teachers from throughout Louisiana. Using the literature on teaching the Bible, an instrument consisting of twenty-three Likert-scale items was designed to measure attitudes relating to three Biblical instruction problem areas--controversial nature, importance, and hindrances. The totals of the responses to these items represented the dependent variable. Independent variables were the two groups--principals and teachers--and a number of demographic groupings.

One-way analysis of variance was used to determine if there were significant differences in attitude scores within the principal and teacher groups in overall attitude scores and between teacher and principal groups concerning the controversial nature, importance, and hindrances of Biblical instruction as well as differences in overall scores between the principal and teacher groups.

Findings. Statistical analysis of the data revealed that no significant difference exists in the overall attitude scores among teachers or principals grouped using the following variables: previous religious training, school size, race, experience, religion, or frequency of church attendance. Also, no significant difference exists in overall attitude scores among principals grouped by age and whether or not the Bible is taught in their schools. Significant differences exist, however, in the attitude scores of teachers grouped by age and whether or not the Bible is taught in their classrooms. Significant differences also exist between the attitude scores of teachers and principals regarding the importance of Biblical instruction and between the overall attitude scores of the two groups.

Conclusions. The Bible is not widely used as an instructional tool or text in Louisiana secondary public school English classrooms, and a probable contributory factor to the Bible's absence is a low estimation of its importance on the part of school administrators.

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